

# Commercial Kitchen Ventilation Compliance Checklist

Makeup Air Requirements • Temperature Controls • Filtration Standards  
Regional Code Comparison • Common Violations • Audit Template

4

Jurisdictions  
Compared

6

National  
Standards

40+

Checklist  
Items

12

Common  
Violations

For informational use only. Always verify requirements with local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).

References: IMC 2021, NFPA 96 2021, ASHRAE 62.1-2022, IBC 2021, CA Title 24, NYC MC, TX/FL Mechanical Codes

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## §1 National & Model Code Framework

The governing standards that most jurisdictions adopt or adapt

Commercial kitchen ventilation in the United States is governed by a layered framework of national model codes and standards. Most states and cities adopt these model codes—sometimes with local amendments—as their baseline requirements. Understanding this hierarchy is essential for any compliance audit.

Standard	Issuing Body	Key Section(s)	Scope	Jurisdictional Adoption
<b>IMC 2021 (International Mechanical Code)</b>	International Code Council (ICC)	<b>§507–§509</b>	Primary commercial kitchen ventilation code. Governs hood types (I & II), exhaust CFM rates, makeup air volume and temperature, air balance schedules, and interlock controls. Adopted by most US states.	Adopted in 40+ states. Basis for CA CMC, NYC MC, TX, FL mechanical codes.
<b>NFPA 96 – 2021 (Ventilation Control &amp; Fire Protection)</b>	Natl. Fire Protection Assn.	<b>Ch. 6–8, 14</b>	Fire-safety standard for commercial cooking systems. Mandates UL 710/UL 1046 listed components, grease filter specs, duct construction (16-ga steel, liquid-tight welds), fire suppression integration, and cleaning schedules.	Enforced by fire marshals nationwide. Required by FDNY, CA, TX, FL fire codes.
<b>ASHRAE 62.1 – 2022 (Ventilation for Acceptable IAQ)</b>	ASHRAE	<b>§6.5</b>	Ventilation standard for IAQ. Classifies commercial kitchen grease hoods as Class 4 exhaust air (highest contamination level – no recirculation). Sets minimum OA rates and exhaust makeup air provisions.	Used in CA Title 24. Referenced in IBC via IECC. Adopted in LEED certification.
<b>IBC / IECC 2021 (International Building / Energy Code)</b>	International Code Council	<b>§403.7.7</b>	Energy code provisions for kitchen exhaust. Requires DCKV (demand-controlled kitchen ventilation) where exhaust >2,000 CFM. Limits replacement air introduced directly into hood cavity to ≤10% of exhaust CFM.	Adopted widely. CA adopted IECC via Title 24 Part 6 with amendments.
<b>UMC 2021 (Uniform Mechanical Code)</b>	IAPMO	<b>§511.3</b>	Alternative to IMC, adopted primarily in western states (CA, AZ, OR, WA for some provisions). Key difference: specifies makeup air must prevent negative pressures exceeding 0.02-in w.c. in cooking areas.	Adopted in California (as CMC), Hawaii, Idaho. Used alongside Title 24.

Note: IRC (International Residential Code) Section M1503 applies to residential kitchens and mirrors IMC requirements for exhaust >400 CFM.

## §2 Makeup Air (MUA) Requirements

Volume, balance, temperature, controls, and hood-specific provisions

Makeup air (also called replacement air) must replenish the volume exhausted by hood fans. Failure to supply adequate MUA creates negative pressure that degrades hood capture efficiency by up to 30%, causes backdrafting of combustion gases, and makes doors difficult to open — all of which are actionable code violations and life-safety hazards.

Requirement	Code Provision
<b>Trigger Threshold</b>	IMC §505: Required when exhaust system is capable of exhausting >400 CFM. UMC §511.3 / NFPA 96 §8.3.1: Applies to all commercial cooking operations.
<b>Volume — General Rule</b>	IMC §508.1.2: Total MUA from all sources must be approximately equal to total exhaust CFM. Practical guideline: 80–90% of exhaust CFM via dedicated MUA unit; remainder from HVAC/transfer air.
<b>Volume — Hood Cavity Limit</b>	IMC §508 / IECC §C403.7.7.1.1: Air introduced directly into the hood cavity (short-circuit) shall NOT exceed 10% of the hood exhaust airflow rate.
<b>Temperature Differential</b>	IMC §508.1.1: MUA temperature must be within $\pm 10^{\circ}\text{F}$ of the conditioned kitchen design setpoint unless the heating/cooling load of the MUA does not exceed the kitchen HVAC system capacity. CA Title 24: Mechanically heated/cooled MUA $\leq$ greater of: space load OR (exhaust CFM – transfer air).
<b>Pressure Limit</b>	NFPA 96 §8.3.1 / UMC §511.3: Negative pressure in cooking area must not exceed 4.9 Pa (0.02 in. w.c.).
<b>Interlock Controls</b>	IMC §508.1: MUA systems must be automatically controlled to start and operate simultaneously with the exhaust system. Must be integrated with hood sensors and fire suppression systems.
<b>DCKV Requirement</b>	IECC / WSEC §C403.7.7.1.3: Demand-Controlled Kitchen Ventilation required when total hood exhaust >2,000 CFM. System must reduce exhaust AND MUA airflow by $\geq 50\%$ under low-load conditions.
<b>Transfer Air Credit</b>	IMC §508.1.2 / CA Title 24: Outdoor air supplied to adjacent spaces (dining, etc.) that migrates to the kitchen through permanent openings may be counted as replacement air. Dining area should be maintained at slight positive pressure relative to kitchen to prevent odor intrusion.
<b>Large Systems (&gt;5,000 CFM)</b>	CA Title 24 §140.9 / IECC: Facilities with combined Type I & II exhaust >5,000 CFM must use ONE of: (a) $\geq 50\%$ transfer air; (b) DCKV on $\geq 75\%$ of exhaust; (c) $\geq 40\%$ sensible heat recovery on $\geq 50\%$ of exhaust; (d) $\geq 75\%$ MUA unheated or heated to $\leq 60^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

**IMPORTANT:** The 80–90% MUA target is a widely cited practical guideline, not a fixed code percentage. The code standard (IMC §508.1.2) requires MUA to be 'approximately equal' to exhaust CFM. A system supplying 80% MUA via dedicated unit plus 10–20% via transfer air from dining achieves full compliance. Systems operating at <75% total replacement air typically trigger code violations.

## §3 Regional Code Comparison Table

California · New York City · Texas · Florida — key differences from model codes

While the IMC and NFPA 96 form the baseline, each state and major city adopts amendments or enforces additional requirements. The table below highlights key deviations from the model code framework.

Requirement	Model Code (IMC 2021)	California (CMC / Title 24)	New York City (NYC MC / FDNY)	Texas (TX Mech. Code)	Florida (FMC)
<b>Governing Code</b>	IMC 2021 (ICC)	CA CMC 2022 + Title 24 Part 4 & 6	NYC MC 2022 + FDNY Fire Code	2021 IMC as adopted with Tx amendments	FMC 2023 (based on IMC 2021)
<b>MUA Trigger Threshold</b>	>400 CFM (IMC §505)	>400 CFM (CMC §511.3)	>400 CFM (NYC MC §505.2)	>400 CFM (follows IMC)	>400 CFM (FMC §505.2)
<b>MUA Volume Requirement</b>	≈ Equal to exhaust CFM (§508.1.2)	≈ Equal to exhaust; MUA ≤ space load or exhaust – transfer air (Title 24 §140.9)	Per Table 403.3.1.1; approx. equal to exhaust (NYC MC §505.2)	≈ Equal to exhaust (IMC §508)	≈ Equal to exhaust; damper required (FMC §505.2)
<b>Temp. Differential</b>	±10°F of kitchen design setpoint (§508.1.1)	±10°F max; heat ≤60°F for >5,000 CFM systems (Title 24)	±10°F (NYC MC follows IMC)	±10°F (follows IMC §508.1.1)	±10°F (follows IMC §508.1.1)
<b>DCKV Requirement</b>	Required if total exhaust >2,000 CFM (IECC §C403.7.7)	Required > 2,000 CFM; ≥50% reduction at low load (Title 24 §140.9(b))	Required per IECC; NYC Energy Code aligns with IECC	Required > 2,000 CFM (IECC adopted via state energy code)	Required > 2,000 CFM (FECC aligns with IECC)
<b>Hood Cavity Air Limit</b>	≤10% of exhaust CFM (IECC §C403.7.7.1)	≤10% of exhaust CFM (Title 24 §140.9(a))	≤10% (NYC MC follows IMC/IECC)	≤10% (IECC adopted)	≤10% (FECC adopted)
<b>Grease Filters</b>	UL 1046 listed; ≥45° angle; steel or equiv. (NFPA 96 §6.1–6.2)	UL 1046; CA fire code aligns with NFPA 96; no mesh filters	UL 1046; FDNY enforces NFPA 96; UL 710 listed hoods req'd (NYC FC §607)	UL 1046; follows NFPA 96 (state fire code)	UL 1046; aligns with NFPA 96 (FL Fire Prevention Code)
<b>Hood Cleaning Schedule</b>	NFPA 96: Monthly (high vol.), Qtrly (moderate), Semi-ann. (low)	Aligns with NFPA 96; CA Fire Code enforces; local AHJ may increase frequency	FDNY: Most commercial kitchens ≥quarterly; high-vol. may require monthly	Aligns with NFPA 96; state fire marshal enforces	Aligns with NFPA 96; FL Div. of Fire Safety enforces
<b>Permits &amp; Inspections</b>	Mechanical permit req'd; performance test at completion (IMC §507)	Mech. permit; HERS duct test req'd (Title 24); local AHJ approval	NYC DOB mech. permit + FDNY review/ approval required	State mech. permit; local AHJ inspection; fire marshal sign-off	FL mech. permit; local bldg. dept. inspection; fire marshal for Type I

<b>Notable Amendments</b>	Model code baseline (no regional amendments)	Title 24 energy efficiency requirements are among most stringent in US; HERS testing; AB 1968 fire code updates	NYC has strictest permitting; FDNY requires certified installers; DEP grease disposal rules	Texas mostly follows IMC; no statewide energy code mandate; local jurisdictions vary widely	Florida residential code M1503.4 mirrors IMC; high-humidity climate influences MUA design
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Always verify with local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Local amendments may supersede state code. Texas has no mandatory statewide energy code; local jurisdictions (Houston, Austin, Dallas) may adopt IECC independently.

## §4 Filtration & Grease Removal Standards

NFPA 96 Chapter 6 — UL 1046, baffle filters, mounting, maintenance

<b>Type I Hood Requirement</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §6.1</b>
All Type I hoods (serving grease-producing equipment) MUST have listed grease removal devices. Mesh filters are prohibited for Type I hoods unless listed as an integral part of a UL 710-listed hood or per UL 1046. (NFPA 96 §6.1.1–6.1.3)	
<b>Listing Standard</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §6.2.3 / UL 1046</b>
Filters must be listed per UL 1046 (Grease Filters for Exhaust Ducts) or UL 710 (Exhaust Hoods). ETL/ASTM F2519-05 listed equivalents are acceptable. All filters must carry visible listing labels. Non-listed or mesh-only filters are a reportable violation.	
<b>Construction Materials</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §6.2.3</b>
Grease filters shall be steel or listed equivalent material. Filters must be of rigid construction that will not distort or crush under normal operation, handling, or cleaning conditions. (NFPA 96 §6.2.3.1–6.2.3.2)	
<b>Mounting Angle</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §6.2.3.4–5</b>
Filters must be installed at an angle of NOT LESS THAN 45 degrees from the horizontal to allow grease to drain properly into collection trays. Filters must be easily accessible and removable for cleaning. (NFPA 96 §6.2.3.5 / §6.2.3.4)	
<b>Exhaust Air Coverage</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §6.2.3.3</b>
All exhaust air must pass through the grease filters — no bypass airflow around filter banks. Filters must be arranged and supported to prevent gaps at edges and corners. (NFPA 96 §6.2.3.3)	
<b>Grease Collection</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §6.3</b>
Grease collection containers/trays must be non-combustible, easily removable, and positioned to capture drainage from filters. Containers must be cleaned before they reach capacity. (NFPA 96 §6.3)	
<b>Solid Fuel Systems</b>	<b>NFPA 96 §14.5.1</b>
Kitchens using solid fuel (wood, charcoal) require SPARK ARRESTOR filters (UL 1046 / NFPA 96 §14.5.1). These have a diamond-pattern grate. Must be constructed of steel or stainless steel.	
<b>Makeup Air Filtration</b>	<b>CA Title 24 §120.1 / ASHRAE 62.1</b>
Makeup air introduced to the kitchen must be filtered. CA Title 24 §120.1(c) requires minimum nominal 2-inch depth filters on all MUA systems supplying to occupiable spaces via ductwork >10 ft. MERV ratings are not specifically mandated by IMC for MUA, but ASHRAE 62.1 requires appropriate filtration to maintain acceptable IAQ. Minimum MERV-8 is common practice for MUA units.	

## Cleaning Schedules

NFPA 96 §11.4 /  
NYC FC

NFPA 96 §11.4 establishes mandatory cleaning frequency based on cooking volume: • Monthly: High-volume (24-hr ops, charbroiling, wok cooking) • Quarterly: Standard restaurants, hotel kitchens, moderate volume • Semi-annually: Low-volume operations, seasonal businesses • Annually: Minimal use (churches, day camps, senior centers) NYC FDNY: Most commercial kitchens must clean at least quarterly; high-volume may require monthly. Documentation of each cleaning must be maintained on-site.

## §5 Temperature Control Requirements

Parameter	Code Requirement	Standard
<b>MUA Temp Differential</b>	Must be within $\pm 10^{\circ}\text{F}$ of kitchen design setpoint temperature, UNLESS the heating/cooling load of the MUA does not exceed the capacity of the kitchen HVAC system. This exception allows untempered MUA if the existing HVAC can handle the thermal load.	<b>IMC §508.1.1</b>
<b>Untempered MUA Limitation</b>	Untempered MUA (outside air delivered without conditioning) is only acceptable if HVAC system can absorb the thermal load. In hot/humid climates (FL, TX Gulf Coast) or extreme cold, untempered MUA often violates the $10^{\circ}\text{F}$ differential rule.	<b>IMC §508.1.1</b>
<b>CA Title 24 – Large Systems</b>	For systems $>5,000$ CFM: MUA heated to $>60^{\circ}\text{F}$ counts toward energy compliance options only if it is in Climate Zone 5. Outside CZ5, heated MUA must be used as part of energy compliance pathway selection.	<b>CA Title 24 §140.9</b>
<b>DCKV Temperature Control</b>	When DCKV reduces airflow to $\geq 50\%$ at low-load conditions, the MUA temperature control system must maintain compliance with the $\pm 10^{\circ}\text{F}$ differential at ALL modulation levels, including minimum flow.	<b>IECC §C403.7.1.3</b>
<b>Compensating Hoods</b>	When MUA is introduced via compensating (front-face) discharge or down-discharge, the hood is more tolerant of slight temperature variations. Short-circuit (hood cavity) MUA is most sensitive to temperature compliance.	<b>IMC §508 / WSEC Commentary</b>
<b>NYC / CA – Energy Code</b>	NYC Energy Conservation Code and CA Title 24 both require that MUA tempering systems be capable of modulation – not simply on/off. Energy recovery devices ( $\geq 40\%$ sensible effectiveness) on $\geq 50\%$ of exhaust are an alternative compliance path.	<b>NYC ECC / CA Title 24</b>

## §6 Common Code Violations – Inadequate Makeup Air

Ranked by inspection frequency and life-safety risk

<b>V-01</b>	<p><b>No Dedicated MUA System Installed</b></p> <p>Exhaust system installed without any makeup air unit. Kitchen operates under chronic negative pressure. Doors difficult to open; exhaust hood capture efficiency severely degraded. Most common in older remodeled spaces where exhaust was upgraded without MUA.</p>	<b>Critical</b>
		Ref: IMC §508.1 / NFPA 96 §8.3

<b>V-02</b>	<b>MUA Volume Insufficient (&lt;75% of Exhaust CFM)</b>	<b>Critical</b>
	MUA unit undersized. System provides less than 75% replacement air. Negative pressure exceeds the NFPA 96 limit of 0.02 in. w.c. (4.9 Pa). Often results from equipment upgrades increasing exhaust CFM without corresponding MUA upgrade.	Ref: IMC §508.1.2 / NFPA 96 §8.3.1
<b>V-03</b>	<b>MUA Not Interlocked with Exhaust System</b>	<b>Critical</b>
	Makeup air unit operates independently – not automatically started/stopped with exhaust system. Allows periods of zero MUA while exhaust operates. Violates interlock control requirement and fire suppression integration requirement.	Ref: IMC §508.1 / NFPA 96 §8.3
<b>V-04</b>	<b>Temperature Differential Exceeds ±10°F</b>	<b>High</b>
	Untempered or poorly tempered MUA delivers air more than 10°F colder/hotter than kitchen setpoint when the existing HVAC cannot absorb the load. Particularly common in northern climates (winter) and hot-humid regions (summer). Creates thermal discomfort and violates IMC §508.1.1.	Ref: IMC §508.1.1
<b>V-05</b>	<b>Hood Cavity (Short-Circuit) MUA Exceeds 10% of Exhaust</b>	<b>High</b>
	Compensating air fed directly into the hood's internal plenum exceeds the 10% cap. This 'short-circuits' the exhaust, effectively reducing capture efficiency. Common in legacy or imported hood designs not engineered for current IECC requirements.	Ref: IECC §C403.7.7.1.1 / CA Title 24
<b>V-06</b>	<b>No Air Balance Schedule on Plans</b>	<b>High</b>
	Design drawings lack the required outdoor air balance schedule/diagram showing all exhaust, MUA, transfer air, and net exfiltration values. Required by IMC §508.1.2. A documentation violation that delays permit issuance and final inspection.	Ref: IMC §508.1.2
<b>V-07</b>	<b>Non-Listed or Mesh Grease Filters</b>	<b>Critical</b>
	Mesh-type or unlisted filters installed in Type I hoods. These do not meet UL 1046 flame resistance and grease capture standards. Constitute a fire hazard and are specifically prohibited by NFPA 96 §6.1.3. Common in DIY installations or budget retrofits.	Ref: NFPA 96 §6.1.3 / UL 1046
<b>V-08</b>	<b>Filters Not at 45° Angle</b>	<b>High</b>
	Grease filters installed vertically or at an angle less than 45° from horizontal. Prevents proper grease drainage into collection trays, causing grease accumulation on filter surfaces – significantly increasing fire risk and cleaning frequency.	Ref: NFPA 96 §6.2.3.5

<b>V-09</b>	<b>DCKV Not Installed Where Required</b>	<b>High</b>
	No demand-controlled kitchen ventilation (DCKV) system where total hood exhaust exceeds 2,000 CFM. Violates IECC energy provisions and CA Title 24. Results in wasted energy (overventilating at low-cook periods) and may trigger energy code compliance failures.	Ref: IECC §C403.7.7.1.3 / CA Title 24 §140.9
<b>V-10</b>	<b>Duct Clearance from Combustibles Less Than 18 Inches</b>	<b>Critical</b>
	Grease duct installed with less than 18 inches clearance from combustible materials (wood framing, drywall, insulation) without approved heat shield. One of the most dangerous structural violations. NFPA 96 allows zero clearance only with non-combustible materials and proper insulation.	Ref: NFPA 96 §7.7 / IMC §506
<b>V-11</b>	<b>Inadequate Cleaning Documentation</b>	<b>High</b>
	No records of hood/duct cleaning by certified professionals. NFPA 96 requires written documentation of each cleaning on-site. FDNY (NYC) specifically inspects for service tags. Missing documentation results in fines and operational shutdown orders.	Ref: NFPA 96 §11.4 / NYC FC
<b>V-12</b>	<b>Negative Pressure in Dining Area</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
	Dining area maintained at negative pressure relative to kitchen instead of slight positive. Allows cooking odors, smoke, and grease vapor to migrate into dining space. Violates design intent of IMC §508.1.2 (dining should be slightly positive relative to kitchen).	Ref: IMC §508.1.2 Commentary

## §7 Compliance Checklist

Pre-inspection verification — print and use on-site

Facility Information			
Business Name: _____ _____	Address: _____ _____	Date: _____ _____	Inspector: _____ _____
Permit #: _____ _____	AHJ Jurisdiction: _____ _____	Adopted Code: _____ _____	Signature: _____ _____

>> A. Hood Type & Installation	Code Ref	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Type I hood installed over all grease-producing appliances (fryers, griddles, charbroilers, ranges)	NFPA 96 §4 / IMC §507.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Type II hood installed where non-grease vapors only (dishwashers, steamers, non-grease cooking)	IMC §507.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Hood extends minimum 6 inches beyond all sides of cooking equipment	IMC §507.4	Pass / Fail / N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Hood mounted at correct height per manufacturer specs and IMC §507.4 (Type I ≤4 ft above cooking surface typical)	IMC §507.4	Pass / Fail / N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Hood is listed (UL 710) OR field-fabricated per IMC §507.1 requirements	IMC §507.1 / UL 710	Pass / Fail / N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> All welds liquid-tight; no gaps or open seams in hood assembly	NFPA 96 §6.2.1	Pass / Fail / N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Hood size and CFM rated for heaviest-duty appliance under the hood	IMC §507.5	Pass / Fail / N/A

>> B. Exhaust System	Code Ref	Status
[ ] Exhaust ductwork is 16-gauge carbon steel or 18-gauge stainless steel minimum	NFPA 96 §7.5	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] All duct joints continuously welded liquid-tight	NFPA 96 §7.5.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Minimum 18-inch clearance from combustible materials (or zero-clearance with approved assembly)	NFPA 96 §7.7	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Duct runs as direct and vertical as practicable; minimal horizontal offsets	NFPA 96 §7.4	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Access panels installed at all changes in direction and per NFPA 96 §7.3 spacing	NFPA 96 §7.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Exhaust fan tested and confirmed at design CFM; hinge kit installed for cleaning access	IMC §507 / NFPA 96	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Upblast fan has rooftop grease containment system where required by local AHJ	NFPA 96 §7.8	Pass / Fail / N/A
>> C. Makeup Air System	Code Ref	Status
[ ] Dedicated MUA unit installed where exhaust system exceeds 400 CFM	IMC §505 / §508.1	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] MUA volume approximately equal to total exhaust CFM (verify via air balance schedule)	IMC §508.1.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Hood cavity (short-circuit) MUA does not exceed 10% of exhaust CFM	IECC §C403.7.7.1.1	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] MUA temperature within ±10°F of kitchen design setpoint (or exception documented)	IMC §508.1.1	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] MUA unit interlocked with exhaust fan — starts/stops simultaneously	IMC §508.1	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] MUA interlocked with fire suppression system	NFPA 96 §8.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Air balance schedule/diagram included on mechanical drawings (all exhaust, MUA, transfer air)	IMC §508.1.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Transfer air from dining accounted for in total replacement air balance	IMC §508.1.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Dining area confirmed at slight positive pressure relative to kitchen	IMC §508.1.2 / Best Practice	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] DCKV system installed where total hood exhaust exceeds 2,000 CFM	IECC §C403.7.7.1.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] DCKV achieves ≥50% reduction in exhaust and MUA at low-load conditions	IECC §C403.7.7.1.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Negative pressure in kitchen confirmed ≤0.02 in. w.c. (4.9 Pa) during operation	NFPA 96 §8.3.1	Pass / Fail / N/A

>> D. Grease Filtration	Code Ref	Status
[ ] All grease filters are UL 1046-listed (check label on each filter)	NFPA 96 §6.2.3 / UL 1046	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] No mesh-only filters installed in Type I hoods	NFPA 96 §6.1.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Filters installed at minimum 45-degree angle from horizontal	NFPA 96 §6.2.3.5	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] All exhaust air passes through grease filters — no bypass gaps	NFPA 96 §6.2.3.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Filters are rigid steel or listed equivalent; no distortion or damage	NFPA 96 §6.2.3.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Grease collection trays present, non-combustible, and not overfull	NFPA 96 §6.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Filters easily removable for cleaning without tools	NFPA 96 §6.2.3.4	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Solid-fuel operations have spark arrestor filters (if applicable)	NFPA 96 §14.5.1	Pass / Fail / N/A
>> E. Fire Suppression	Code Ref	Status
[ ] Automatic fire suppression system installed in Type I hood (wet chemical, UL 300)	NFPA 96 §10 / IFC §904.12	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Suppression system tested per NFPA 96 §11.2 (semi-annual)	NFPA 96 §11.2	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Fusible links/actuation devices replaced per manufacturer schedule (typically ≥6 months)	NFPA 96 §11.3	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Suppression system interlocked with exhaust fan and fuel shutoff	NFPA 96 §10.5	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Current inspection tag visible and on-site	NFPA 96 §11.4 / NYC FC	Pass / Fail / N/A
>> F. Hood Cleaning & Maintenance	Code Ref	Status
[ ] Most recent hood/duct cleaning date: -----	NFPA 96 §11.4	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Cleaning performed by certified professional (documentation on-site)	NFPA 96 §11.4 / NYC FC	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Cleaning schedule matches cooking volume: Monthly / Quarterly / Semi-Annual / Annual	NFPA 96 §11.4	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] All grease accumulation removed from hood, filters, ducts, and fans	NFPA 96 §11.6	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Before/after photos or service report from cleaning company on file	FDNY / AHJ requirement	Pass / Fail / N/A

>> G. Permits & Documentation	Code Ref	Status
[ ] Current mechanical permit on file for ventilation system	IMC §101 / Local AHJ	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Approved mechanical drawings available on-site	IMC §106	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Performance test completed at installation (exhaust CFM, MUA flow verified)	IMC §507 / CA Title 24	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] HERS duct test completed if required by local energy code (CA)	CA Title 24	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] All equipment submittals/shop drawings approved by AHJ	IMC §106 / Local AHJ	Pass / Fail / N/A
[ ] Previous inspection reports and corrective action items resolved	AHJ	Pass / Fail / N/A

## §8 Restaurant Operator Self-Audit Template

Complete quarterly — retain for AHJ inspection, insurance, and NFPA 96 compliance

This self-audit template is designed for restaurant operators and facility managers to proactively identify ventilation deficiencies before formal inspections. Complete quarterly. Retain completed copies for at least 3 years.

RESTAURANT OPERATOR QUARTERLY VENTILATION SELF-AUDIT			
<b>Establishment:</b>	_____	<b>Audit Quarter:</b>	Q1 / Q2 / Q3 / Q4
<b>Address:</b>	_____	<b>Year:</b>	_____
<b>Completed by:</b>	_____	<b>Role/Title:</b>	_____
<b>Date:</b>	_____	<b>Next Audit Due:</b>	_____

1. MAKEUP AIR SYSTEM — OPERATIONAL CHECK	YES	NO	N/A	Notes / Corrective Action
MUA unit operating when exhaust system is running?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Any unusual noises, vibration, or airflow reduction from MUA unit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Kitchen door test: Can door open/close without excessive resistance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Candle/tissue test: Tissue drawn toward hood face (good capture)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
No visible smoke or grease escaping from hood perimeter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Pilot lights on gas appliances staying lit (no backdraft)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
MUA unit filters clean and free of blockage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----

2. GREASE FILTERS — VISUAL INSPECTION	YES	NO	N/A	Notes / Corrective Action
All filters in place (no missing filter slots)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Filters properly seated at 45-degree angle with no gaps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Filter surfaces free of excessive grease buildup?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----

Grease collection trays empty / <75% full?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
No visible damage, distortion, or corrosion on filters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
UL listing labels visible on all filters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----

3. EXHAUST HOOD & DUCT – VISUAL INSPECTION	YES	NO	N/A	Notes / Corrective Action
Hood interior surfaces free of heavy grease accumulation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
No visible grease dripping from hood or duct access panels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
All access panel covers secured and in place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Exhaust fan operating and no excessive vibration?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Rooftop grease containment system not overflowing (if applicable)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----

4. FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM	YES	NO	N/A	Notes / Corrective Action
Current inspection tag dated within 6 months (or per local requirement)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Suppression system nozzles and fusible links free from grease coating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Manual pull station accessible and unobstructed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Ansul/wet chemical agent cylinder pressure in green zone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----

5. DOCUMENTATION	YES	NO	N/A	Notes / Corrective Action
Last professional hood cleaning date: _____ (within schedule)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Cleaning service report on file?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Mechanical permit and approved drawings on-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----
Prior inspection violations resolved and documented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	----- -----

<b>AUDIT SUMMARY</b>
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Total Items: _____	Items Passed: _____	Items Failed: _____	Items N/A: _____
<b>Overall Status: [ ] PASS [ ] FAIL [ ] CONDITIONAL</b>			
Corrective Actions Required (describe on back or attach separate sheet):			
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			
Signature: _____ Date: _____ Next Audit Due: _____			

## §9 Source References

#	Source	Publisher	URL
1	International Mechanical Code (IMC) 2021, Sections 505–509	International Code Council	<a href="https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IMC2021">https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IMC2021</a>
2	NFPA 96: Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations, 2021 Edition, Chapters 6–8, 11, 14	National Fire Protection Association	<a href="https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/nfpa...">https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/nfpa...</a>
3	ASHRAE Standard 62.1–2022: Ventilation and Acceptable Indoor Air Quality, Section 6.5	ASHRAE	<a href="https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/bo...">https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/bo...</a>
4	International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) 2021, Section C403.7.7 – Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems	International Code Council	<a href="https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IECC2021">https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IECC2021</a>
5	California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6) 2022, Section 140.9 – Commercial Kitchen Exhaust	California Energy Commission	<a href="https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics...">https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics...</a>
6	California Mechanical Code (Title 24, Part 4) 2022 – Chapter 5, Commercial Kitchen Provisions	California Building Standards Commission	<a href="https://www.dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Codes">https://www.dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Codes</a>
7	New York City Mechanical Code 2022, Sections 505–509	NYC Department of Buildings	<a href="https://www.nyc.gov/site/buildings/codes/2022...">https://www.nyc.gov/site/buildings/codes/2022...</a>
8	FDNY Fire Code Section 607 – Commercial Kitchen Hoods	NYC Fire Department / NYS Fire Code	<a href="https://nysfair.ny.gov/wp-content/uploads/202...">https://nysfair.ny.gov/wp-content/uploads/202...</a>
9	UL 1046: Standard for Grease Filters for Exhaust Ducts	Underwriters Laboratories	<a href="https://www.ul.com/offerings/ul-1046">https://www.ul.com/offerings/ul-1046</a>
10	UL 710: Standard for Exhaust Hoods for Commercial Cooking Equipment	Underwriters Laboratories	<a href="https://www.ul.com/offerings/ul-710">https://www.ul.com/offerings/ul-710</a>
11	When Make-Up Air is Required for Commercial Kitchens – White Paper	Accurex Manufacturing	<a href="https://www.accurex.com/blog/white-papers/whe...">https://www.accurex.com/blog/white-papers/whe...</a>
12	When is Make-Up Air Required for Kitchens	Greenheck Fan Corporation	<a href="https://www.greenheck.com/resources/blog/when...">https://www.greenheck.com/resources/blog/when...</a>
13	2021 WSEC & 2021 IMC – Commercial Kitchen Air Systems Presentation	Washington State Energy Codes / DOC	<a href="https://waenergycodes.com/pdf/2025%20WSEC_IMC...">https://waenergycodes.com/pdf/2025%20WSEC_IMC...</a>
14	A Guide to Commercial Kitchen Ventilation Requirements	Putnam Mechanical (Florida)	<a href="https://www.pmechanicalfl.com/post/a-guide-to...">https://www.pmechanicalfl.com/post/a-guide-to...</a>
15	FDNY Regulations for Restaurants: What NYC Kitchens Need to Know	Filta Kleen	<a href="https://filtakleenco.com/fdny-regulations-for...">https://filtakleenco.com/fdny-regulations-for...</a>

DISCLAIMER: This document is compiled for informational and educational purposes only. Code provisions change regularly and local AHJ amendments may differ significantly from the model codes presented here. Always consult the currently adopted local code edition and verify requirements with your Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) before design, installation, or inspection. This checklist does not constitute legal or engineering advice.